

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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P 201822Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7924

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 17198

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: THE DC PARTY POWER BALANCE

REF: STATE 243574

1. THE FOLLOWING IS INTENDED TO SUPPLEMENT THE EMBASSY'S RECENT REPORTING AND ANALYSIS OF DC INTERNAL POLITICS AS CONTAINED IN ROME'S 14777, 16652 AND 17199 IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL.

2. A RESHUFFLING OF INTERNAL FACTIONAL LINEUPS HAS BEEN UNDERWAY FOR SOME TIME. WHILE IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO PERCEIVE CLEARLY WHAT THE NEW

INTERNAL EQUILIBRIUM WILL BE, AND EVEN LESS HOW IT MIGHT AFFECT DECISIONS AT THE DC CONGRESS (IF INDEED, IT IS HELD ON SCHEDULE), IT IS APPARENT THAT THE OLD 1976 CONGRESS LINEUP HAS FALLEN APART. AT THAT TIME THE PARTY SPLIT ALMOST EVENLY BETWEEN SUPPORTERS OF ZACCAGNINI AND FORLANI. THE ZACCAGNINI SLATE WAS SUPPORTED PRIMARILY BY THE PARTY'S CENTER AND CENTER-LEFT WINGS (FORZE NUOVE, BASE, MOROTEI, DOROTEI BREAKAWAYS SUCH AS RUMOR AND GULLOTTI, WITH THE ARNAUD AUTOMONISTS (FORMER FANFANIANI) TIPPING THE BALANCE. THE PICCOLI-BISAGLIA DOROTEI, ANDREOTTIANI AND FANFANIANI, THEN REPRESENT-

ING THE PARTY'S CENTER AND CENTER-RIGHT WINGS, SUPPORTED FORLANI'S CANDIDACY. THE DC SECRETARIAT UNDER ZACCAGNINI REFLECTED THE

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VICTORY OF THE DC "LEFT"--A CABAL OF FORZE NUOVE, BASE AND MOROTEI (GALLONI, BODRATO, PISANU AND SALVI) TOOK OVER THE DAY-TO-DAY POLITICAL DIRECTION OF THE PARTY. THE MODERATES AND CONSERVATIVES (ANDREOTTIANI, DOROTEI, AND FANFANIANI) RETAINED MUCH OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL OF THE PARTY (SIGNORELLO, GASPARI, D'AREZZO).

3. NO SOONER WERE THE 1976 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OVER, HOWEVER, THAN

THE ZACCAGNINI CONGRESS "MAJORITY" BEGAN TO DISINTEGRATE. AS OFTEN HAPPENS, GALLONI AND BODRATO BECAME MORE AND MORE MEN OF ZACCAGNINI'S SECRETARIAT THAN SURROGATES FOR THE BASE AND FORZE NUOVE LEADERSHIP. THE FIRST DEFECTION WAS THAT OF FORZE NUOVE'S DONAT-

CATTIN; OVER THE PAST YEAR HE HAS MISSED NO OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE ZACCAGNINI'S FALTERING LEADERSHIP (AS WELL AS THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT).

VIRTUALLY OVERNIGHT, DONAT-CATTIN SHIFTED FROM MAN -OF-THE-LEFT TO HIS PARTY'S MOST ELOQUENT DEFENDER OF FREE ENTERPRISE AND ONE OF ITS MOST ARDENT CRUSADERS AGAINST COMMUNISM. ALTHOUGH DONAT-CATTIN IS KEEPING HIS OPTIONS OPEN (HE HAS REMAINED ON GOOD TERMS WITH MORO), HE HAS OFTEN ACTED IN CONCERT WITH FANFANI TO HAMSTRING AN ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT OR MORO PARTY INITIATIVE.

4. A FAR MORE IMPORTANT SHIFT, THAT OF ANDREOTTI FROM THE CENTER TO HIS PARTY'S LEFT WING, EVOLVED AS A FUNCTION OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S BRIDGING ROLE AS THE LEADER OF A GOVERNMENT DEPENDENT ON THE

LEFT PARTIES, THE PCI PARTICULARLY, FOR ABSTENTION SUPPORT. NEVER A MAN OF THE PARTY, THE IMPERATIVES OF THE POSITION AND ANDREOTTI'S PRAGMATIC BENT HAVE FURTHER ISOLATED HIM FROM OTHER PARTY LEADERS. ON OCT. 19, ON THE EVE OF THE DC NATIONAL COUNCIL, THE ANDREOTTIANI ANNOUNCED THEIR FULL SUPPORT FOR ZACCAGNINI.

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5. ANDREOTTI'S MOST SERIOUS RIVAL (NOT SO MUCH FOR THE POSITION OF PRIME MINISTER AS THAT OF PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC) REMAINS ALDO MORO. THE LATTER HAS WORKED QUIETLY AND ALOOFLY DURING THE PAST YEAR TO CONSOLIDATE HIS CONTROL OVER THE PARTY SINCE HIS ELECTION AS DC PRESIDENT LAST OCTOBER. ALTHOUGH MORO RARELY SHOWS HIS CARDS, HE MAY BE WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE MODERATE DOROTEO LEADER (AND DC CHAMBER WHIP) PICCOLI TO FASHION A NEW CENTRIST ALLIANCE. IF THIS IS INDEED MORO'S STRATEGY, IT WOULD REPRESENT, FOR HIM A SHIFT TO THE RIGHT.

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6. AS THE LARGEST FACTION, THE MODERATE DOROTEI CONTROL ABOUT 25 PERCENT OF THE CONGRESS VOTES. THEIR LAST CONVENTION AT MONTECATINI, OCT. 9-11, WAS IMPORTANT IN THAT IS SIGNED A RAPPROCHMENT BETWEEN THE TWO RIVAL DOROTEI LEADERS, PICCOLI AND BISAGLIA. SPARING ZACCAGNINI FROM DIRECT ATTACK, THE DOROTEI TARGETED THEIR CRITICISM ON DEPUTY SECRETARY GALLONI FOR WORKING IN "DANGEROUS ISOLATION." THEY RENEWED THEIR CALL FOR A POLITICAL SECRETARIAT THAT, IN EFFECT, WOULD DILUTE GALLONI'S INFLUENCE BY INCLUDING DOROTEI AND OTHER MODERATES. SIGNIFICANTLY, PICCOLI CALLED FOR A "RESHUFFLING OF THE CARDS" TO ESTABLISH "A NEW EQUILIBRIUM" AT THE CENTER UNDER MORO. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT IN CALLING FOR A NEW CENTER MAJORITY, THE DOROTEI SIGNED THEIR SUPPORT FOR MORO'S REPLACEMENT OF ZACCAGNINI AS

PARTY SECRETARY, A MOVE THAT DONAT-CATTIN HAS ALSO PUBLICLY ADVOCATED.

7. FOR HIS PART, FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI (A FANFANI MODERATE) HAS ALSO APPARENTLY DECIDED THAT THE MOMENT TO STRIKE HAS COME. ABANDONING HIS NORMALLY CAUTIOUS RESERVE, FORLANI CIRCULATED AN OPEN INVITATION TO HIS "FRIENDS" TO MEET ON OCT. 21 AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL. ALTHOUGH RATHER LAMELY INSISTING THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO FORM HIS OWN FACTION, FORLANI EVIDENTLY HOPES TO REGAIN A VOICE IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY AND POSSIBLY DISASSOCIATE HIMSELF FURTHER FROM FANFANI. THE LATTER, WHO RETAINS CONSIDERABLE CLOUT DUE TO HIS POWERFUL ORGANIZATIONAL HOLD OVER MANY SECTORS OF THE PARTY, HAS PROGRESSIVELY LOST GROUND AS A NATIONAL LEVEL LEADER. IN ADDITION TO FANFANI'S OLD-STYLE IMAGE, THERE IS LITTLE ROOM AT THE LEADERSHIP LEVEL FOR A CONSERVATIVE GIVEN THE STRONG CONDITIONING OF ITALIAN POLITICS BY PARTIES OF THE LEFT. THERE IS, HOWEVER, STRONG SUPPORT FOR FANFANI'S ANTI-COMMUNISM IN BOTH THE PARTY AND ELECTORATE.

8. ALTHOUGH THE FACTIONAL LINEUP WILL CONTINUE TO BE FLUID IN

NATURE, VARYING WITH THE ISSUES AND EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS, THE CURRENT POSITIONS OF PRINCIPLE DC LEADERS ON THE KEY ISSUE OF THE PARTY'S STANCE TOWARD THE PCI COULD BE DIAGRAMMED AS FOLLOWS:

LEFT (MORE OPEN TO PCI) CENTER RIGHT(HARDER ON
PCI)

GALLONI
(BASE)

ANDREOTTI MORO PICCOLI BISAGLIA FANFANI
 ZACCAGNINI (DOROTEI)(DOROTEI)

DE MITA FORLANI DONAT-CATT
IN
(BASE) (FORZE-NUOVE)

IN CONTRAST TO FANFANI, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT DONAT-CATTIN WOULD PROBABLY LEND HIS SUPPORT TO MORO, NOTWITHSTANDING HIS POSITION ON THE RIGHT ON THE PCI ISSUE.

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9. HOW DO THE NEWER DC PARLIAMENTARIANS FIT INTO THIS PICTURE?
AS DISCUSSED IN REFTELS, THE GENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY AMONG SUBSTANTIAL

NUMBERS OF FIRST AND SECOND TERM PARLIAMENTARIANS IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT CONDITIONING FACTOR IN INTERNAL DC GROUPINGS. SMARTING UNDER THE OTEN PRE-EMPTORY AUTHORITY OF ALL THE DC'S TRADITIONAL, FACTIONAL LEADERS (AS CHAMBER WHIP, PICCOLI OFTEN BEARS THE BRUNT OF THE IRE), THE "NEW" PARLIAMENTARIANS WANT A MORE INFLUENTIAL VOICE IN PARTY ORGANIZATION AND DECISIONMAKING. POLITICAL MODERATES FOR THE MOST PART, THEY ARE GENERALLY MORE CONSERVATIVE ON THE PCI ISSUE THAN MANY OF THE PARTY'S LEADERS. WHILE A MORE FORMAL GROUPING OF NEW PARLIAMENTARIANS MAY BE CONGEALING AROUND THE AGNELLI "HILTONITES," MOST ARE AS YET UNWILLING TO CUT THEIR FORMAL TIES TO THE POWERFUL AND INFLUENTIAL FACTIONS WHICH STILL LARGELY CONTROL ADVANCEMENT AND SURVIVAL IN DC POLITICS. MANY WERE COWERED BY THE FACTIONAL LEADERS' CONVINCING DEMONSTRATION OF THEIR RETRIBUTIVE POWER LAST JULY WHEN EVERY INDEPENDENT RENEWAL CANDIDATE EXCEPT BIANCO WAS DEFEATED FOR ELECTION TO THE DC PARLIAMENTARY GROUP BTX BLOCK VOTING FOR FACTIONAL SLATES. GARDNER

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